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THE  
HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES  
OF  
ECTON,  
IN THE  
COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON,  
(ENGLAND.)

BY JOHN COLE,  
*Editor of "Herveiana," &c.*

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“O look upon this garden fair  
Of verdant hill and vale.”

REV. W. B. CLARKE.

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(SEVENTY COPIES PRINTED.)

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## P R E F A C E .

An early connection with the village whose history is developed in the following pages must be considered as the motive, and it is hoped will be the apology, for the publication of the succeeding sheets ; yet simple as the place may appear in itself, it will be forever venerated as the birth-place of that upright Judge, Sir Augustine Nicholls, and as the residence of the parent stock of the illustrious Franklin ; it also receives high honours from its connexion with Bh. Percy, Hogarth, Cumberland, and a long train of celebrated worthies.

The Collections relative to the former and present state of this ancient village were made during a residence there, merely for my own information and amusement, without the most distant idea of submitting them to public perusal ; circumstances, however, have since transpired which have induced me to prepare them for the press ; and it is hoped that the work may be the means of preserving a few facts, which may prove interesting, at least to its inhabitants.

The County of Northampton possessed separate Historical Accounts of two of its villages, before the

appearance of the present one, but it must be confessed that they were both eminently conspicuous in the annals of history. Had I indeed wished to have added to the series of *historical* villages in the County, *Holdenby* would have presented strong claims for distinction.

The information contained in the volume has been obtained from a variety of authentic sources; and I cannot in justice omit to acknowledge that much has been derived from the History of the County, by Bridges; nor can I forget the obligations I owe to George Baker, Esq., of Northampton, Mr. Cattell, of Peterborough, and the Rev. J. L. Sisson, of Wakefield, for their several interesting communications and suggestions.

Had the encouragement in subscriptions been adequate to the expenditure for splendid illustration, the volume might have been more richly embellished, as the place presents objects of much interest for the pencil; but it is thought that its present simple style of execution will not render it of less utility.

The History of Ecton (the impression of which is very limited) is now with much respect presented to my Subscribers and to the Collectors of topographical works in general.

*Scarborough,*  
*Dec. 24, 1825.*

THE  
HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES  
OF  
ECTON.

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Ecton, like most other places, has been very variable in its orthography, having been written *Eketon*, *Echington*, and in Doomsday Book *Echentone*; it is situated in the County of Northampton, and the Hundred of Hamfordsho, five miles respectively from Northampton and Wellingborough, and sixty-six from London, in Latitude 52 Deg. 15 min. On the east a brook divides it from Earl's Barton, on the north it is bounded by Mear's Ashby, Sywell, and Overstone; on the west a narrow brook separates it from Great and Little Billing, and on the south the river Nen divides it from Cogenhoe and Whiston.

The village is delightfully situated on rising ground, enjoys a pure atmosphere, and has its approach for about a quarter of a mile on each side of the turnpike road, flanked with venerable elms, whose umbrageous branches overshadow a grassy plain of several yards in width, which forms a delightful place of promenade. Various pleasing presentations of the lofty tower of the Church offer themselves picturesquely to view, through the aged trees which skirt the domain.

It appears that Ecton has formerly been more ex-

tensive, as a Farm-house,\* with several other dwellings, under the name of *Little Ecton*, situated to the east of Mr. Isted's House, were standing in the memory of some of the inhabitants now living. The Farm-house was unfortunately destroyed by fire about sixty years since. Several houses also stood to the south of the Village: a well of good water which belonged to them still remains.

For the following descent of the Manor, we are indebted to the late learned Antiquary, John Bridges.

At the time of the general survey, *Henry de Ferieres*, to whom Ralph was under-tenant, had four hides in *Echentone*. The arable land was eight carucates. Of this estate one hide and a half with two carucates was in demesne; and four servants, eight villanes, nine cottagers, and twelve soemen, with eight cottagers had six carucates. There were two mills, of the yearly rent of *fourteen shillings*, and thirty two acres of meadow. The whole had been *Bundi's* freehold, and valued at *iiil.*, but now was rated at *es.* In Henry II.'s reign these four hides were in the hands of *William de Mungomery*, who held them of the Earl of Ferrers. And with the Family of Montgomery this Manor continued till the year 1595.

In the third year of Edward I., *William de Montgomery* and *Stephen de Burgh* were bound in the

\* There is a tradition that Ecton was formerly a market-town, and that the market was held in a field now well known by the name of *Dove-house close*: but there is no confirmation of this report to be found in the fragment of the usual market-cross in the village.

sum of two hundred marks to *Nicholas de Cogenhoe* and *Amicia* his wife, in consideration of which sum the said *Nicholas* and *Amicia* gave up all their right, in *Eketon* Mill, the meadow called the *Holm*, and the advowson of the rectory, of the which they were seized by the gift of *John de Montgomery*. By inquisition taken in the twenty-fourth of the same reign, *William de Montgomery* was certified to hold one knight's fee here of the Earl of *Derby*. In the ninth year of Edward II., *Walter de Montgomery* was Lord of *Eketon*. Upon levying the aid, in the twentieth of Edward III., for knighting the King's son, this *Walter de Montgomery* accounted for two Knight's fees in *Eketon*, held of the Earl of Ferrers of the honour of *Tuttebury*.

From the *Montgomery* family this Manor in *Ecton* passed into the hands of *Thomas Catesby, Esq.*, between whom and *Arthur Montgomery* a fine was levied of it in the eighteenth year of *Queen Elizabeth*.

Walter Montgomery  
Lord of Ecton anno  
38 Edward III.

Walter de Montgomery  
in the 19th of Richard II.  
entailed it on his son

Roger Montgomery=

Edward Montgomery=

anno I. Hen. II.

John Montgomery=Margaret Mordant

William Montgomery=Eliz. Aynsworth.

John  
Thomas Montgomery=Jane Worley.

Michael Montgomery=Eliz. Lewes.

William Theophilus Lewis Montgomery=Jane d. of Sir Arthur Ralph Lane  
h. to his bro. hus of Fr. Barnes  
Lewis.

This gentleman descended from Sir *John Catesby*, of *Arthingworth*, Kt. Judge of the Common Pleas, and was succeeded upon his decease in 1592 by *George Catesby*, Esq., his son and heir. In course of descent from this *George* it came to *Thomas Catesby*, Esq., who died seized of it in 1699. By *Margaret* his wife, grand-daughter to *Sir Richard Sunwell*, of *Upton*, Kt., he left issue two daughters, *Mary* married to *Henry Paget*, Earl of *Uxbridge*, who succeeded to *Whiston* lordship, and *Elizabeth* the wife of *Ralph Freeman*, of *Aspeden* in *Hertfordshire*, Esq., his successor in the Manor of *Ecton*. *Mr. Freeman*, having considerably improved his estate and seat here, sold them in 1712 to *Thomas Isted*, of the *Middle Temple*, Esq., from whom they have descended to his grandson, *Samuel Isted*, Esq., the present proprietor.

Beside this capital manor anciently possessed by the *Montgomeries*, *Warden Abbey* in *Bedfordshire* had certain revenues and lands in *Ecton*, granted after the suppression of that house, by the name of a Manor to *John Gostewicke*. This was purchased by *Thomas Nichols*, Esq., who left it at his death, in the tenth year of Queen *Elizabeth*, to *Thomas Nichols*, his son and heir, a minor of fifteen years old. In the twenty-eighth of the same reign, a fine was levied of this Manor between *Edward Stoning*, Gent., and *Augustin Nichols*; which *Edward* the year following sold it to *John Freeman*, Gent., who then levied a fine of it. In the thirteenth year of *James I.* died *John Freeman*, Esq., at *Great Billing*, and, leaving

no male issue, was succeeded in his estate here by Catherine Gorges, wife of Sir Edward Gorges, Bart., only daughter of *Margaret*, late wife of Sir *Robert Osborne*, the only daughter and heir of the said *John Freeman*. By the inquisition then taken the premises were certified to be held of the King *in capite* by Knight's service.

In the fifth year of *Philip* and *Mary* died *Francis Catesby*, Esq., of *Hardmede*, in the county of Bucks, second son of *Anthony Catesby*, of *Whiston*, seized likewise of a Manor\* with certain lands and tene- ments in *Ecton*, which he left to *Thomas Catesby*, his son and heir, a minor three years of age. This Manor was held of the King and Queen, as of their Manor *Ecton*, parcel of their duchy of *Lancaster*, by fealty, suit of court, and an annual payment of *ixd.* *Thomas Catesby* dying without issue, his pos- sessions in *Ecton* devolved on *Thomas* the grand-son of *Anthony*, and father of *George Catesby*, of *Whiston*, Esq., who transmitted it to his posterity. The whole Manor is now in the possession of *Samuel Isted*, Esq.

The Lordship contains about two thousand, two hundred, and forty acres. The upper part is a red sandy soil.

#### GRAVEL PITS.

It seems that the produce of these Pits, in the time of *Mr. Morton*, was in great esteem, as he gives

\* Probably the *Montgomery* Manor.

the following minute description in his Natural History of the county :

“ I shall first describe an uncommon sort of stone, which I call *Gravel-stone* for the same reason that the common sand-stone has its name. It consists for the main of sand and pebbles of the larger size, such as those of ordinary gravel. They are united into a very firm and solid body by means of a natural cement of a finer sort of matter, which appears to be composed partly of a fine arenaceous or stony matter, and partly of spar. This is the description of the *Gravel-stone* which is found lying in *strata*, or else in huge lumps, in the Gravel Pit at Ecton, and is there used sometimes for foundation-stones, and endures thus for many years without the least decay.

The gulfe-joints that encompass the stacks of stone at Ecton, dividing stack from stack, are from three to twelve feet wide. The longest stacks are about ten feet square, supposing the irregularities of them to be taken off. The number of the *strata* that constitutes them is not always the same. So soon as they remove the bottom course of stone, there rushes in water into the Pit, both in summer and winter, in a dry time as well as in wet. The exterior part of the stone of these stacks, that part of it I mean which lies next the gulfe-joints, is always moist and soft.”

Good Sand, such as is used in building, may be procured in a field at the top of the village. Gravel

is also dug, among which occur belemnites and astroites, and graphites with several other fossil shells.

The Spring, called *Northampton Well*, rises in a field on the left hand side of the road leading to Northampton. Another rises in a field opposite.

### THE CHURCH.

In this edifice are none of the cloister-like gothic doors, nor richly ornamented fonts, such as we see in our Cathedrals or Collegiate Churches, but it affords one uniform display of neatness—there is nothing florid, nor, in the least, ornamental, in its architecture, if we except the upper story of the Tower, which, it is conceived, has been erected since the other parts of the building, as there is a manifest difference in the style and workmanship.\* It is dedicated to *Mary Magdalen*,† and consists of a body, north and south aisle, north and south porch, and chancel. At the west end is a handsome tower, in which are six highly musical bells,‡ (the first bearing date 1749, the second 1619, the third and fourth 1612, the fifth 1622, and the sixth 1634,) with a

\* The north porch and the burial place of the Montgomeries were probably erected at the same period.

† The dedication of the church is shown from the Will of Thomas Billing, of Ecton, dated 3d of July, 1504, in which he directs his body to be buried “in Cimiter Ecclie Bte Marie Magdal de Ecton.” He then gives to the high Altar iis. iiijd. To the bells xiid., and several other similar legacies.

‡ One of these bells (most probably the first,) was presented by Mr. Bagley, a bell founder, of Ecton.

dome and cross at the top, of considerable elevation. The clock, which is destitute of a dial-plate, was put up in 1630, and the chimes (which play the 4th *Psalm* on a Sunday, and *Britons strike home* on the other days, at the hours of four, six, eight, and twelve) in 1690. Between the church and chancel was anciently a rood loft; and at the upper end of the south aisle is a chantry chapel, the burial-place of the *Montgomeries*. The length of the church\* and Chancel is one hundred and twelve feet, the breadth of the body and aisles fifty-two feet six inches, the base of the tower, a square of twenty-five feet six inches, height, including the weathercock,† about one hundred and sixteen feet. The interior has been lately ceiled and newly pewed with oak. The Chancel is large, and separated from the church by a neat iron railing, and at the altar appears the Decalogue, handsomely cut upon stone. Its walls are covered with some interesting memorials of affection by *Rysbrac* and other sculptors of eminence in their day, which, although they cannot pretend to a rival-

\* There is a large engraving of this church, from a private plate, now very scarce. It is a S. W. view, J. Shipley, del., W. H. Toms, sculp., at the foot of which is a small head of John Palmer, Esq., Lord of the Manor of Cogenhoe and Patron of this Church, W. Hogarth, pinx. B. Baron, sculp. An engraved account of the Palmer Family from Ecton Chancel, appears as a companion to the view of the Church. The former was reduced, and inserted in Bridge's History of the County, but without a copy of the head of John Palmer, Esq.

† In 1811 the Vane and Dome underwent a thorough repair, when the former was considerably raised.

ship with *Brington* or *Warkton*, afford an unusually elegant appearance for a village mausoleum. The man of genius may here have his feelings aroused by the contemplation of the literary eminence of the characters enshrined around, as here are entombed the remains of several

“—rare worthies who adorn'd our land,  
And shone like constellations.”

In the wall of the south side of the church, near the porch, is inserted a circular carved stone, and it is curious to observe, that a somewhat similar one appears at “Aldborough, in the E. Riding of the county of York, bearing an ancient Saxon inscription, commemorating the builder of the church,” a representation of which is given in Gough’s *Camden*.

On the same side, near the Montgomery burial-place, is a stone affixed in the building, which has apparently been used for some other purpose. It is hollowed out, and has received several indentations.

The following inscription appears upon a stone in the east butment of the north porch:\*

: A: d: m: m: cccc:  
· l: v: · edificatū:

These letters are two inches high, and cut deep in a stone  $17\frac{3}{4}$  inches long, and 12 inches wide.

\* In this porch is a basin for holy water, and over the entrance a bracket for a statue.

The Register\* begins in 1559. This Rectory in 1254, 38 Hen. III., was valued at thirty marks; in 1535, 26 Hen. VIII., at xxil. xviiis. viid. The patronage of the church was formerly in the family of *Montgomery*, and passed with their manor into the hands of Thomas Catesby, Esq.† In 1712, Mr. Freeman sold the advowson to Thomas Palmer, at that time incumbent; and it is now in the hands of the Rev. Thomas Whalley. It is in the deanry *Rothwell*.

The Wake follows *St. Mary Magdalen* (22 July).

#### INCUMBENTS.

The first institution, which I can discover, to the Rectory of Ecton, was by William de Ferrariis, *Com. Derby*, who presented

*Henry de Campania*, clerk, A. D. 1220. To him succeeded *Master Adam de Belstede*, by Walter de Mungomeri, 8 Sept., 1269.

*Stephen de Burgo*, by the same patron, 6 June, 1274.

*Roger de Monte Gomer*.

*Ralph de Barton*, clerk, Jan. 1288.

This Gentleman probably received his name from a neighboring village, Earl's Barton.

\* "PAROCHIAL REGISTERS were first introduced by lord Cromwell when Vicar General in 1538 (2 Hen. 9); but many of the clergy, either through ignorance or prejudice, evading compliance, the injunction was enforced in 1547 (Edw. 6,) and by a canon in 1603 (Jac. 1.) every incumbent was enjoined to complete his register from 'the law's first taking place,' or at least from 1558." *Baker*.

† At Upton, near Northampton, are portraits of Thomas Catesby, of Whiston and Ecton, Esq., and Margaret both by *Lely*.

*Simon de Hegham*, by Walter de Monte Gomeri, 4 March, 1306.

*Robert de Markeyate*, acolyte, by Walter de Montgomery, son of the preceding, 3 Nov. 1311. "An acolyte was an inferior officer in the church, who handed the water vessels to the officiating priest; but though acolytes and subdeacons were only probationers, and not permitted to "minister in holy things," yet they as well as minors were frequently instituted to parochial benefices, their diocesan injoining them to pursue their studies to qualify them for entering into priests' orders, and in the mean time their cures were consigned to the charge of chaplains or curates."

*Nicholas de Lodelowe*, clerk, by Walter de Montgomery, 5 Nov. 1324.

*John de Cobele*, priest, 10 Aug. 1337.

*John de Macclesfeld*, priest, 14 July, 1340.

*Henry de Astbyry*, priest, by Walter de Montgomery, 5 Aug. 1349.

*John de Newenham*, priest, 7 Jan. 1353.

*Thomas West*, The. Eccl. Cathed. Landaff. 16 July, 1360.

*John Catryk*, by Roger Montgomery, 17 Jan. 1400.

*John Montgomere*, clerk, by Roger Montgomere, 4 Dec. 1411.

*Robert Haldenby*, clerk, by John Montgomery, 31 March, 1452.

*Master John Hauberk*, D. D., by Roger Montgomery, 24 Dec. 1401.

*John Bate*, priest, by the same patron, 6 Aug. 1453. He was presented to the Rectory of Great Billing, 24 Nov. 1444, which benefice he resigned on being appointed to this of Ecton. He was rector also of Little Billing, and of Wilby.\*

*Master Edward Montgomery*, priest, by the same patron, 31 Jan. 1478.

*Master Thomas Boyvile*, priest, by William de Montgomery, 17 Sep. 1491.

*Master John Alyndon*, by the same patron.

*Thomas Wilkinson*, clerk, by John Montgomery, gent., 9 Nov. 1502.

*Brother Thomas Saunders*, Prior of Chacombe, by the same patron, 20 Feb. 1503.

*Master John Woolseley*, clerk, by the same patron, 30 Mar. 1535.

\* Vide Baker's Northamptonshire,

*John De Coloribus, D. D.*, was presented by Michael Montgomery, gent., on the death of the last incumbent, and instituted 27 Oct. 1557.

*William Philtheon*, was presented Ludowick Muntgomery, gent., on the death of the last incumbent, and instituted 19 Jan. 1558-9.

*George Conigrave*, was presented by Thomas Bawde, gent., on the death of the last incumbent, and instituted 15 Feb. 1577.

*Edward Still*, was presented by Thomas Bawde, of Ecton, Esq., and Jane his wife, on the death of the last incumbent, and instituted 19 May, 1591.

*Nicholas Baines*, 1592.

*Richard Carier, A. M.*, was presented by George Catesby, Esq., of Greesley, Derbyshire, on the death of the last incumbent, and instituted 9 Dec. 1611.

*William Parker, A. M.*, was presented by John Carier, of Yaxley, gent., on the resignation of the last incumbent, and instituted 18 Sep. 1619.

*Richard Middleton, B. D.*, Archdeacon of Cardigan, and Chaplain to King Charles, was presented by Edward Parker, Esq., on the resignation of the last incumbent, and instituted 5 March, 1628, died 16 Nov. 1641.

*John Palmer*, was presented by Sir Christopher Yelverton, Bart., by grant from Clifton Catesby, Esq., on the death of the last incumbent, and instituted 18 Nov. 1641.

This gentleman was promoted to the Archdeaconry of Northampton, 25 Oct. 1665, and was the successor of *John Quarls, A. M.* He was a celebrated linguist, and published a work entitled, 'The Planisphere,' &c. He died in 1679, and was interred in the chancel of Ecton church, where an elegant monument, with a fine bust by Rysbrac, preserves his memory.

*John Palmer, A. M.*, was presented by Thomas Catesby, Esq., and instituted 22 May, 1680.

*Thomas Palmer, A. M.*, was presented by Thomas Catesby, Esq., on the death of the last incumbent, and instituted 7 Mar. 1688-9.

*Bradley Whalley, A. M.*, was presented by Thomas Evans, M. D., Professor of Medicine, on the death of the last incumbent, and instituted 22 Feb. 1715.

*Thomas Palmer, A. M.*, was presented by Thomas Evans, M. D.,

on the resignation of the last incumbent, and instituted 9 March, 1720.

*Bradley Whalley, A. M.*, was presented by John Palmer, gent., on the death of the last incumbent, and instituted 28 June, 1732.

*Eyre Whalley, A. M.*, was presented by John Palmer, Esq., Inner Temple, on the resignation of the last incumbent, and instituted 28 March, 1738.

*Peter Whalley, A. M.*, was presented by Barbara Whalley, widow, on the death of the last incumbent, and instituted 5 March, 1762.

This gentleman was the laborious editor of "The History and Antiquities of the County of Northampton, collected by John Bridges," the publication of which was finished in 1791, of Jonson's works in 7 vols. 8vo.; he wrote "An Inquiry into the learning of Shakespeare," "A Vindication of the Evidences and Authenticity of the Gospel," Lines addressed to the Rev. James Hervey on his "Meditations," several single sermons, &c. He was born at Rugby, and received his education at Merchant Taylors' school and at St. John's College, Oxford, of which he became fellow. He was Vicar of St. Sepulchre's, Northampton, and of Horley in Surrey, Rector of St. Margaret Patens, Master of the Grammar School, Christ's Hospital (1768), which he resigned in 1776, on being appointed to the mastership of St. Olave, Southwark. He died in 1791.

*Palmer Whalley, A. M.*, was presented by the same patron on the death of the last incumbent, and instituted Feb. 28, 1730.\* He died April 10, 1803.

This gentleman was confined to his room for a long period before his death, during which time he composed, and circulated among his parishioners, a small poetical work entitled, "The sick Minister's short but affectionate Address to his People."

*Thomas Whalley, A. M.*, was presented by himself, on the death of the last incumbent, and instituted June 21, 1803.

\* Sic in orig. Qr. 1780?

*MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS.**On a free-stone near the chancel-door.*

HERE LYETH THE BODY  
 OF CHRISTIAN BAVNES  
 WIFE TO NICHOLAS  
 BAVNES RECTOR OF THIS  
 PARRISH WHICH DIED  
 VPON THE LAST DAY OF  
 DECEMBER ANO MDCXXXIV  
 BEING THE LXVII YEARE OF HIR  
 AGE.

*On a free-stone within the altar rails.*

Memoriae venerabilis viri Rychardi Middleton S S.  
 Theologiae Professoris, et hujus ecclesiae pastoris,  
 ex antiqua familia Middletonorum de Aula Middletoniana in Comitatu Westmorlandiae oriundi.

Qui ex hac vita faeliciter decessit die decimo  
 sexto Novembris, Annoque Domini 1641.

*On a free-stone at the entrance on the south side the  
 chancel; under these arms—On a Cheveron five  
 acorns impaling On a Cress three Crescents :*

Anna Palmer  
 Vidua Josephi Palmer  
 Generosi, filia Mri. Johannis Dod\*

\* Mr. John Dod was one of the nonconformist divines, and a man of considerable acquirements, particularly in the Hebrew. He was called, from his celebrated Exposition of the Ten Commandments, the Decalogist. He died in 1645.

Decalogistae celeberrimi  
 Decessit Februarii 24  
 Anno 1662.  
 Ætatis suae 73.

*On collateral stones at the feet—Arms of Palmer  
 impaling Catesby within a bordure two lions passant.*

Johannes Palmer  
 Archidiaconus Northamptoniae  
 et hujus  
 Ecclesiae fidelis Pastor  
 Decessit Christo Decemb. 9.  
 Anno Domini 1679  
 Ætatis suae 67.

Administravit hanc Ecclesiam per annos 38

*On the adjoining stone:*

Brigitta Palmer  
 Filia Cliftoni Catesby de Ecton  
 Armegeiri, Vidua  
 Johannis Palmer Archidiaconi  
 Northamptoniae  
 Decessit in Christo  
 Martii 19. Anno  
 1680  
 Ætatis suae 54.

*Upon a like stone:*

Johannes Palmer, A. M.  
 Filius natu maximus Johannis Palmer

Archidiaconiae Northamptoniae  
 Et hujus Ecclesiae post patrem fidelis Pastor,  
 Decessit in Christo,  
 Morte non sibi sed aliis immatura,  
 21 Novembris 1688.  
 Anno Ætatis suae 33.  
 Curae pastoralis 9.

*Collateral to the last, under the arms of Palmer,  
 On a Cheveron five Acorns, impaling A frett, in chief  
 three crescents, Crest, On a wreath a Demy Lion hold-  
 ing an oak branch fructed:*

Thomas Palmer, A. M.  
 Filius natu secundus  
 Johannis Palmer  
 Archidiaconi Northamptoniae  
 Et hujus Ecclesiae  
 Post fratrem fidelis Pastor  
 Decessit in Christo  
 3 Octobris 1714.  
 Anno } Ætatis suae 55.  
 } Curae pastoralis 27.

Anna Palmer  
 Thomœ Palmer hujus Ecclesiae Rectoris  
 et Annœ Uxoris ejus Filia natu Maxima  
 Objit 25 Die Junii  
 Anno Dni 1761.

*Against the south wall of the chancel is a neat white marble Compartment, adorned with a curtain drawn back: at the top is an urn, and between, two cherubim heads—below the urn these arms—Gules on a pile Argent three lozenges of the first, impaling, Or on a Cheveron gules five acorns of the field. On a pedestal, on each side an oval tablet, is a weeping angel with one leg resting upon a scull and on a tablet this inscription:*

Near this place  
lie the bodies

OF SAMUEL FREEMAN, D. D.\*  
Dean of Peterborough

Who died Octr. 14. Anno } Domini 1707  
} AEtat. 63.

OF SUSANNAH FREEMAN  
his Widow, who dyed

April 26. Anno } Domini 1710  
} AEtat. 56.

OF SUSANNAH THEIR DAUGHTER  
Who dyed Aug. 12. Anno } Domini 1707  
} AEtat. 31.

Also the bodies of four infants  
BERTHIA SAMUEL SAMUEL WILL.

\* Dr. Freeman, descended from the family of that name in *Hertfordshire*; formerly Rector of St. Anne's, near *Aldersgate*, and successor to *Dr. Patrick*, in the Rectory of *St. Paul's, Covent Garden*.

*Upon two stones near each other in the chancel :*

SAMUEL FREEMAN, D. D.  
AND DEAN OF PETERBURG  
DYED OCT. 14<sup>TH.</sup>

1707  
AGED 63.

ALSO THE BODY OF SUSANNAH  
FREEMAN HIS WIDOW.

---

SUSANNAH  
DAUGHTER OF SAMUEL FREEMAN, D. D.  
AND DEAN OF PETERBURGH  
AUGUST 12<sup>TH.</sup>

1707  
AGED 32.

*Upon a stone within the altar rails :*

In Memoriam  
Venerabilis viri Eyre Whalley, A. M.  
Hujus Ecclesiae dignissimi Pastoris  
Qui cum annos viginti et quatuor  
Curaverat, Subita omnino, non sibi  
sed suis morte Correptus  
Decessit in Christo 27 Jan.  
Anno } Domini 1762  
} Aetatis suae 59.

*Upon a stone in the chancel, near the south door :*

In Memoriam  
Progenie Palmer Walley, A. M.  
Hujus Ecclesiae Rectoris et  
Mariae Uxoris ejus  
Edvardus } 20 Maii 1772 aet. 3  
Maria Obijt } 13 Feb. 1776 aet. 5  
Johannes Palmer } 11 Decm. 1780 aet. 1  
*Sic Deo visum est.*

*Upon a marble tablet, underneath the south window  
of the chancel :*

Sacred  
To the Memory of  
Catherine Maria Whalley,  
Fourth Daughter of  
Charles James Pack, Esq.  
of Prestwold, Leicestershire.  
She died April 18th, 1817,  
Aged thirty nine years.  
*Sic Deo visum est.*

*Upon a tablet at the bottom of the North aisle :*

Near  
this place by  
the Remains of her  
Parents, lyeth the Body  
of Mrs. Catherine Smith,  
who whilst living, possessed  
a generous and charitable  
Disposition of Mind :  
and having discharged the *Duty*  
of a *Housekeeper* in the Family  
of *Mr. Ald. John Woolston* of  
*Northampton*, deceased,  
upwards of 40 years with  
the utmost Fidelity  
died the 2nd, day of  
May 1767, Aged  
65 years.

*Upon the wall in the aisle, near the north door.*

Memorandum that  
John Barker, Baker,  
of Ecton, Batchelor, who dyed  
September the 27th. 1729 did, in his last Will  
and Testament, give to the parish of Ecton, by

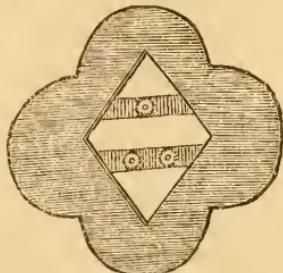
his own hand-writing in the following form :

Also, I give to the Parish of Ecton my great acre of Meadow, lying and being in West-holme, in the Parish of Earl's Barton, the profits that arise from the Meadow to be distributed yearly and every year at Christmas, viz. Seven yards of Grey Kersey cloth, About three shillings a yard, to make two men's Coats, viz. William Morris, Sen. and Richard Hensmann, For and during their lives, and after their decease The money to be lay'd out to buy two coats for two Poor men as the minister and Churchwardens of Ecton shall think convenient, and the remainder of the money that is left to be given in a Dole of bread on Saint John's day.

*Upon a tablet in the north aisle :*

The Rev. PALMER WHALLEY, late Rector of this Parish by a codicil to his Will, dated the 10th. of Sep. 1801, gave £116. 16s. 4d. Stock in the 3 per cent Consolidated Bank Annuities, to six Trustees, in trust to pay the clear Yearly Dividends to the Rector or Minister for the time being, to be by him laid out in the purchase of two doles of bread one half to be distributed on Lady Day, and the other half on St. Michael, on which days he desired the Common Prayers might be read in the Church, and the doles given to such persons and families as should constantly frequent the same at the discretion of the Rector or Minister, then present ; particular regard being had to those, who should regularly attend the Holy Communion.

DANIEL HOOTON      }  
ROBERT FASCUTT\*      }      Churchwardens.



\* The "familie" of Fuscutt of this village is "renowned for it's antiquitie" in the place, as it appears that a Will of W. Greenway, of Eketon, dated 1489, is witnessed by Robert Foscote.

*Upon a slab near the pulpit:*

CONSTANTIA ORLEBAR

Third Daughter of

JOHN ORLEBAR, ESQ.

(of Hinwick,

in the County of Bedford)

She had been more than forty

years resident in Ecton,

where she died on the

6th. of July 1808,

aged 69.

At her particular

request, her remains are

here deposited, and this

memorial of affection placed

by her surviving Sisters

MARY and ELIZ. ORLEBAR.\*

*Upon a neat marble tablet near the vault.*

Sacred

to the Memory of Mary,

wife of

the Rev. Francis Jones,

of Loddington, in this County,

eldest daughter

of Richard Carter, Esquire, of

Foxley, in Wiltshire.

Her remains

are desposited in this Church,

\* The two Sisters were buried at Puddington, Beds.

in the family vault of Samuel  
Isted, Esquire; at whose house  
She expired Aug. 15. 1812,  
after an illness of 24 hours,  
in the 33d. year of her age;  
leaving a deeply afflicted  
Husband  
to deplore her loss,  
after the short happy union  
of three months.

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### INSCRIPTIONS

#### IN THE CHURCH-YARD.

*Upon two Stones near the north porch to the memory  
of the ancestors of Dr. Franklin:*

HERE LYETH  
THE BODY OF  
THOMAS FRANKLIN  
WHO DEPARTED THIS  
LIFE JANUARY THE 6  
ANNO DOMINI 1702  
IN THE SIXTY FIFTH  
YEAR OF HIS AGE.

HERE  
LYETH THE BODY OF  
ELEANOR FRANKLIN

THE WIFE OF THOMAS  
FRANKLIN WHO DEPARTED  
THIS LIFE THE 14TH OF  
MARCH 1711  
IN THE 77 YEARE  
OF HER AGE.

*Inscriptions on a large Tomb near the belfry door.*

Mary Mitchell,  
*Grand-daughter of*  
Daniel and Mary Wal-  
pole. She died Sep.  
the 8, 1744, aged  
one year and five  
months.

Near this place lyeth the  
Body of John Latham,  
and Elizabeth Carter,  
of the Parish of Widinbury,  
in the County of Chester.

HE died August 1725,  
Aged 52 years, SHE died  
July 1728, Aged 49  
years.

In Memory of  
Mary Walpole,  
Relict of Daniel Walpole.  
She died May the 8th, 1748,  
Aged 72 years.

In Memory of  
Daniel Walpole,  
Husband of Mary Walpole.  
He died the 20th. February  
1735, Aged 66 years.

Elizabeth,  
the Daughter of Daniel  
and Mary Walpole.  
She died April the 25th.  
1721, Aged  
3 years.

As a proof of the healthfulness of the place, the following instances of longevity are collected:— There are at least forty-three names of persons on Stones in the church-yard whose ages exceed 70, one 95, and perhaps an equal number of those to whom no tomb-stones have been erected. There are now living in the village about 10 men upward of 70, 10 women upward of 70, and four upward of 80.

## ECTON HOUSE.

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At the distance of a few paces from the church appears the elegant Mansion of Samuel Isted, Esq., commanding an uninterrupted view over a delightfully wooded country, embracing the charms of hill and valley scenery, with its pleasing embellishment, water. Here is said to have been formerly a nunnery or cell, subordinate to Delaprè Abbey near Northampton, which was founded in the reign of King Stephen for Cluniac Nuns. At the back of the house is a yard, bounded by high walls, which still retains the name of *Nun's-court*. The interior of the house has, however, undergone a total change; and, in the year 1756, a very handsome front was erected, composed of fine yellow stone. The sweep before the house is particularly enlivening, presenting a fine lawn, in the centre of which is a large fish-pond; the sides are delightfully enclosed with flourishing trees of various kinds, leading to tastefully laid-out plantations. The stone used for the building of the house was dug from a Quarry in Mear's Ashby Field.

## THE LIBRARY,

“Presents a cheerful character, in conjunction with the soft and quiet scenery from the lawn in front.” It is embellished with a few busts of celebrated characters, and one painting only, and that an appropriate one, the Right Rev. *Thomas Percy*, *Bishop of Dromore*, by *Abbott*; “a name,” observes Dr. Dibdin, “consecrated in the annals of black-letter learning: dear to every man who has the curiosity and sense to listen to the rude songs of his ancestors, and to catch a portion of the energetic simplicity which they impart.”

In this library is contained the “very MS. which formed the basis of the Bishop’s celebrated ‘*Reliques*,’ which is thus described by Dr. Dibdin :\*”

“The MS. in question is a narrow, half-bound book, with blue-paper sides, and brown leather back. It is 15 inches and five eighths in length, by about 5 and six eighths in width. Every page has a margin, to the left, of about an inch and a half in width —marked by a perpendicular line: the poetry uniformly occupying the right side of the margin. The book may be about an inch in thickness. We have the following introductory prefix in an ancient hand. ‘*Curious Old Ballads wh. occasionally I have*

\*The following is Dr. Dibdin’s animated account of his visit to this mansion :

“It was in the winter of 1815, when I visited, for the second time, the worthy and hospitable owners of Ecton Hall, in Northamptonshire, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Isted: the lady of the mansion being the eldest daughter of the poetry-loving Pre’ate, of whom we are discoursing. The snow was on the ground, the heavens were turbid; the air was sharp and biting, and the hours of day-light were necessarily few. At such a season, and in such a mansion, what could be more delightful and congenial than, sitting by the side of a blazing fire, the inspection of the **VERY MS.** which formed the basis of the Bishop’s celebrated ‘*RELIQUES*,’ published for the first time in 1765 in three crown octavo volumes!”

met with. N. B. This volume contains near 40,000 verses, reckoning 520 pages, and about 75 lines to a page: which however makes it 39,000.' A little farther, the Bishop has written as follows: N. B. When I first got possession of this MS. I was very young, and being in no degree an Antiquary, I had not then learnt to reverence it, which must be my excuse for the scribble which I then spread over some parts of it's margin; and in one or two instances for even taking out the leaves—to save the trouble of transcribing. I have since been more careful.' T. P.

This is followed by a memorandum of great interest, signed by the Bishop himself, in his usual manner before he was advanced to the prelacy. 'MEMORANDUM. *Northumberland House, Nov. 7, 1769.* This very curious old Manuscript in it's present mutilated state but unbound and sadly torn, I rescued from destruction, and begged at the hands of my worthy friend *Humphrey Pitt, Esq.* then living at Shiffnal in Shropshire, afterward of Prior Lee near that town; who died very lately at Bath: viz. in Summer, 1769. I saw it lying dirty on the Floor under a bureau in ye parlor; being used by the Maids to light the fire. It was afterward sent most unfortunately to an ignorant Bookbinder, who pared the margin, when I put it into boards in order to lend it to Dr. Johnson."

Among the book-treasures here may be mentioned "The *Northumberland Household Book*," which the Bp. edited before his appointment to the Bishopric of Dromore, bearing the following title:

*The Regulations and Establishment of the Household of Henry Algernon Percy, the fifth Earl of Northumberland, at his Castles of Wreesil and Leikinfield, in Yorkshire; begun Anno Domini MDXII. London; printed 1770.*

In the preface, he writes that it "is copied from an ancient MS. in possession of the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland, who conceiving that so singular a curiosity might afford the same amuse-

ment and pleasure to others, which it had given to themselves, have caused a small impression to be taken off, merely to bestow in presents to their friends."

### THE BILLIARD ROOM

is a capacious apartment and has its ceiling ornamented with elegant frett-work. The Family Arms, with the motto *Nosce Te ipsum*, are raised over the fire-place, upon which ancient maxim the following lines were written impromptu :

#### KNOW THYSELF.

To know ourselves—how hard the task !  
Whilst pride conceals th' unwelcome truth ;  
From our own faults to pluck the mask,  
Is difficult for age, as youth.

May gracious heaven to me impart  
Such portion of this skill divine,  
As may ameliorate my heart,  
And check each sinful thought of mine.

### DRAWING ROOM.

The Drawing Room is filled with Pictures, among which are the following :

- A Very fine Portrait of a Nun.
- A Marriage Feast.
- The Crucifixion.
- A Holy Family.
- A Candle-light Scene.
- Spanish Pieces, &c.
- Several Portraits.

The chimney piece is of marble and has an admirable piece of sculpture upon its entablature:—subject—Boys sliding on the ice; over which is a fine view of *The Coliseum*.

### THE LITTLE DRAWING ROOM.

The following Pictures are in this much-admired apartment :

Mrs. Percy,

the late Bishop of Dromore's Lady, holding in her hand a scroll, on which is the celebrated glee, “Oh Nanny;” she being the *original*. The lines were addressed to her, before marriage, by the Bishop.

Mrs. and Master Isted, *in crayons*.

Mr. Ambrose Isted, with a view in the back ground of the Episcopal palace at Dromore.

The Honble. Mrs. Meade and two of her children.

The following lines on the death of the Hon. Mrs. M. are copied from the *Northampton Mercury*.

REMEMBRANCE backward turns her eye  
Through the dim shade of vanish'd years,  
And brings the forms of Friendship nigh—  
The Muse embalms them with her tears.

Oh! once that Muse, in life's fair noon—  
But long the date is past and o'er,  
Could boast a Friend—oh! lost too soon!  
The worthy Prelate of Dromor.

The Friend of Goldsmith—Johnson's Friend—  
Of Jones—of Genius every where—  
Candid to blame—proud to command—  
In learning deep—of judgement clear—

And oft she yet recalls the hours  
 Of classic converse—social glee,  
 Beneath yon hospitable bowers,  
 Lamented Percy! pass'd with thee.

And well she recollects the gloom,  
 That all the neighborhood o'erspread,  
 When Fate's irrevocable doom  
 Descended on thy honor'd head.

But hark! again the voice of woe  
 Is heard by Lagan's winding stream—  
 Again the tears of sorrow flow—  
 A *kindred Star* withdraws its beam!

A Scion of the Percy stock,  
 By every virtue graced, endear'd—  
 Cut off by Death's untimely shock,  
 Has from earth's vision disappear'd!

The wounds of Friendship bleed anew—  
 (For she too was the Poet's friend)  
 Lamented Lady! long for you  
 Shall warm Affection's sighs ascend.

Over the door is Ecton House, and on the right hand of it a very beautiful Landscape.

#### *TAPESTRY ROOM.*

Here is a large piece of Tapestry—Hunting the Stag.

This Room contains the following Family Portraits :

Ambrose Isted, Esq., Citizen of London, Son of Richard Isted, of Lewes in Sussex, Gent. ob. 1692.

Mrs. Sarah Isted, Wife of Ambrose Isted, Esq., Citizen of London, Daughter of Thomas Feltham, Citizen of London, ob. 1720.

Thomas Isted, of Ecton, in Northamptonshire, Son of Ambrose Isted and Sarah his Wife, born Dec. 9, 1677. Died Oct. 12, 1732.

Mrs. Anne Isted, wife of Thomas Isted, of Ecton in Northamptonshire, Esq., Daughter of Fulk Rose, of the Island of Jamaica, Esq. and Elizabeth, his wife. Ob. Dec. 26. 1722.

Fulk Rose, of the Island of Jamaica, Esq.

Ambrose Isted, Esq.

Mr. Cumberland, in his Memoirs, gives the following excellent character of Mr. Ambrose Isted :

“ Through every scene of my life, from my childhood to the lamented event of his death, which happened whilst I was in Spain, he was invariably kind, indulgent, and affectionate to me. I conceive there is not upon record one, who more perfectly fulfilled the true character of a country-gentleman in all its most respectable duties and departments than did this exemplary person ; nor will his name be forgotton in Northamptonshire, so long as the memory or tradition of good deeds shall circulate, or gratitude be considered as a tribute due to the benevolent. He was the pattern and very model of hospitality most worthy to be copied : for his family and affairs were administered and conducted with such measured liberality, such correct and wise economy, that the friend, who found nothing wanting which could constitute his comforts, found nothing wastefully superfluous to occasion his regret. Though Mr. Isted’s estate was not

large, yet by the process of enclosure, and above all by his prudent and well-ordered management, it was augmented without extortion and left in excellent condition to his son and heir. The benefits he conferred upon his poorer neighbours were of a nature far superior to the common acts of almsgiving (though these were not omitted) : for in all their difficulties and embarrassments he was their counsellor and adviser, not merely in his capacity of acting justice of the peace, but also from his legal knowledge and experience, which were very considerable and fully competent to all their uses ; by which numbers, who might else have fallen into the talons of country-attorneys, were saved from pillage and beggary. With this gentleman my father acted as justice, and was united in friendship and party ; and to him he resorted upon all occasions, were the opinion and advice of a judicious friend were wanted. Our families corresponded in the utmost harmony, and our interchange of visits was frequent and delightful. The house of Ecton was to me a second home, and the hospitable master of it a second father ; his gaiety of heart, his suavity of temper, the interest he took in giving pleasure to his guests, and the fund of information he possessed in the stores of a well-furnished memory and lively animated genius, are ever fresh in my recollection, and I look back upon the days I have passed with him as some of the happiest in my life. For many years before his death, I saw this excellent man by

intervals excruciated with a tormenting and incurable disease, which laid too deep and undiscoverable in his vitals to admit of any other relief than laudanum in large doses could at times administer: nothing but a soul serene and piously resigned as his was, could have borne itself up against a visitation at once so agonizing and so hopeless; a spirit, however, fortified by faith, and a conscience clear of reproach can effect great things, and my heroic friend through all his trials smiled in the midst of his sufferings, and submitted unrepining to his fate. One of the last letters he lived to write I received in Spain: I saw it was the effort of an exhausted frame, a generous zeal to send one parting testimony of his affection to me, and being at that time myself extremely ill, I was hardly in a capacity to dictate a reply."

The Bishop of Dromore.

The Lady of the Bishop of Dromore,  
with several other portraits.

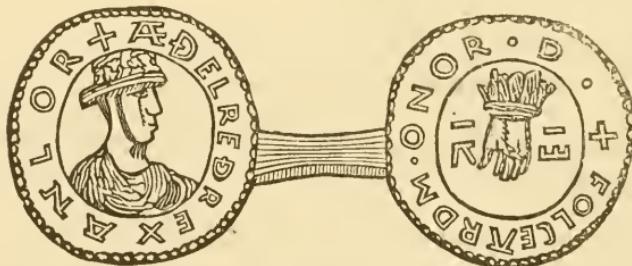
A large painting of the Honorable and Rev. P. Meade's Family.

In another apartment is a portrait of Mrs. Ann Isted, Daughter of Ambrose Isted, Esq., and Sarah his Wife. Born Feb. 26, 1682. Died Jan. 28, 1763.

And in one of the bed-rooms, a very effective portrait of King James the 2nd, when Duke of York, in armour.

Attached to the house are flower-gardens, plantations, and grounds otherwise diversified by ornament, and laid out in a style worthy of the taste of Brown; in one of the former of which is erected a Summer-House from a design by the celebrated *Inigo Jones*.

In these Gardens, about two hundred yards north eastward from the Church, as Mr. Catesby's workmen were levelling some ground in 1762, they discovered several bones and skulls lying in order from west to east. Among them were found two Saxon silver coins, of the size of a silver three-pence, which is an argument that may be adduced to show the probability of its having been an establishment of the Saxons; and hence an idea of the antiquity of the place is formed, although respecting the extent of its jurisdiction we have no account.



"This Coin occurs in the first table of the *Saxon Coins*, in Bishop Gibson's Edit. of *Camden's Britannia*. And it is not unlike the Coin described by *Speed* in p. 392 of his *History*."<sup>\*</sup>

\* Bridges.

## THE RECTORY HOUSE

is situated very near the Church, and is a substantial edifice of stone, built by Mr. Palmer, Rector, in 1693; since which period two wings have been added, one forming a handsome Drawing-room, and the other a Kitchen, &c., and along the whole length of the original portion of the building has been raised an ornamental veranda; which, in conjunction with a flower-garden in front, gives a cheerful appearance to the rectorial mansion, now occupied by the Rev. Thomas Whalley.

Although *Hogarth* was a frequent visitant at the Rectory, yet it was not likely that any of “the first efforts of his genius” should be discovered among the stores of Ecton, as here the great artist did not appear until he had attained the meridian of his fame; but a few of his unequalled performances yet grace the walls of

### *THE DRAWING ROOM,*

which are here enumerated :

#### Portrait of Hogarth.

His head in a cap, a pug dog, and a palette with the line of beauty.\*

Portrait of John Palmer, Esq., Lord of the Manor of Cogenhoe (*Vide p. 10.*)

\* “There is a print engraved by Hogarth himself, from this painting, which is excessively scarce; (usually sells for three guineas) as, after striking off a few impressions, he effaced his own head from the plate, and inserted that of Mr. Churchill.”

### The Village Magistrate.

This House, beside being the receptacle of the original paintings of Hogarth, contains also a very good collection of *English Coins and Medals*; and the *Library* presents a small, but splendid and choice, assemblage of works on Divinity, &c.

In a room above stairs, fitted up correspondently throughout with antique furniture, and presenting a pleasing picture of ancient decoration, are portraits of the Rev. Palmer Whalley (with a view of Ecton Church,) and his lady.

There was formerly a bowling-green at the termination of the grove, which is situated behind the house; but it has of late years given place to improvements according to the modern taste.

On the south side of the Church is a building erected in the modern cottage style, the residence of Miss Ann Orlebar, to which Dovehouse close forms the lawn, it having been environed with plantations and otherwise embellished, and the place is altogether a delightful abode.\*

The present public-house, called *The World's End*,†

\* The Farm-house near the lawn attached to Miss Orlebar's cottage, was built by Mr. Henry Bagley, Bell-founder.

The House in Church-lane, near the cottage was built in 1813. The large red stones at the corners came from the Ekins' mansion at Weston Favell.

The large House near the Parsonage was built by Mr. John Barker, Baker.

† The old public-house stood near the large Walnut-tree in the orchard belonging to the present building.

was built about sixty years since. The accommodations here are superior to those of the generality of village-inns, and the stabling extensive. As *Hogarth* was a visitor of the place about that period, it is very probable that it received its sign from that celebrated artist's curious emblematical production under the same title.

Situated in about the centre of the village is the Free-school, a neat erection, bearing the following inscription upon its front :

*A SCHOOL FOR POOR CHILDREN*

built by *John Palmer*,

A. MDCCLII.

Mr. Palmer gave a close in the parish, now called The Poor's Close, the rent of which is applied to the purpose of putting out boys apprentice.

The Baptists have a Chapel in the village, which has been lately re-built by Mr. Childs; and the Wesleyan Methodists have erected one by subscription, which has been open about twelve months.

There was formerly a Friendly Society in the place, to which each member contributed a small weekly sum, and in case of illness received a regular payment from the funds; but I am sorry to observe (as such societies are particularly beneficial in their results), that it has been broken up for some years.

The Lordship is remarkably well-wooded; Elm, Beech, Oak, and indeed almost every species of tree

flourishes in the most luxuriant manner: the former "is allowed to attain a most respectable growth in the Counties of Northampton and Leicester. This proves its partiality for a dry, loose, and deep soil, which latter is an essential object, as it strikes its roots directly downward." There is a very lofty holly, upward of four feet in girth at about a foot and a half above the ground, on the right hand of the foot-road leading to Earl's Barton, in the plantations of Samuel Isted, Esq. Fruit trees of all kinds arrive at great perfection.

The following scarce birds have been shot at Ecton: *The Nuthatch,\* the Royston Crow,† Hobby, Quail, Sand-piper, Dob-chick, and Kittiwake.*

*Discarded Font.*—There is a curiously carved horse-trough in the Farm-yard of Mr. William Fassett, which has evidently descended from its original place of destination. It is thought to be the remains of the old Font of the Church. It is round, and about forty-five inches in circumference, and three in thickness.

\* In July, 1809.

† "The Royston or hooded crow, which breeds in Scotland and other northern regions, migrates in October to the southern districts of this island, being forced by the snow from its native haunts. It is readily distinguished by its ash-colored back, and black head. Next to the raven it is the most destructive bird of its genus that is known in this country, killing lambs and young partridges, and moor-fowl, and picking out the eyes of horses that happen to be entangled in bogs; on which account, in several parts of Scotland, it is proscribed, and a reward offered for its head." (Aikin.)

A Statute for hiring servants is regularly held here in October.

The principal businesses of the place are the useful arts of Lace and Shoe making, as men work at the latter for the extensive shoe manufacturers of Northampton, "a town," to use the words of an old writer, "which may be said to stand on other men's legs, where (if not the best) the most and cheapest *Boots* and *Stockings* are bought in *England*."

In 1749 the village consisted of about 90 families and 420 inhabitants; by the census of 1801, 90 houses and 474 inhabitants; and by that of 1811, 100 houses and 490 inhabitants.

*The Jubilee, Oct. 25th, 1809.*

The Jubilee, commemorative of the fiftieth anniversary of King George III. accession to the throne, Oct. 25, 1809, was celebrated in a very joyful manner at this place. In the morning a Sheep was roasted whole in a Close near the town, and afterward paraded through the village, accompanied with acclamations of joy. The remainder of the day passed with the greatest mirth.

*Ecton Festival in Honour of Peace.*

"A Festival in honour of Peace took place here, on Monday the 18th of July, 1814. On this occasion, the lawn before the house of Samuel Isted, Esq., was occupied by the public, about 500 of whom sat down to an ample and excellent dinner, provided for the occasion. The utmost harmony and con-

viviality were conspicuous, not a countenance was gloomed with sorrow, but every individual appeared to feel that this was a day justly appropriated to enjoyment. Some of the numerous assembly had ribbons in their hats, on which appeared mottoes in gold, viz., “*Wellington*,” “*Peace and Plenty*,” and a few with the following appropriate inscription: “*The Rich and Poor are met together, the Lord is the Maker of them all.*” In fact, the whole of the proceedings of the day afforded a practical commentary on this text. In the evening dancing commenced, at which the old militia band, which was procured for the purpose, attended, and after the company had grown weary of tripping “on the light fantastic toe,” the entertainment was varied, and concluded with a good display of fire-works.”

*The Waits.*\*—On Christmas Eve, 1815, the Musicians of Ecton, accompanied by the Vocalists of the Church, revived the Custom of going round the village at midnight, and singing a Carol at the principal houses.

*Descent of Mr. Green's Balloon at Ecton.*

“On Tuesday, July 30, 1822, about four o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Green, accompanied by Mr. S.

\* “For some time previously to Christmas it is a common practice for itinerant musicians to go round playing their instruments at midnight; this is called the *waits*. The idea is derived from the angels that *waited*, or attended, upon the birth of Christ. In imitation of these, shepherds, in ancient times, used to usher in Christmas with carols and music.”

V. Griffith, proprietor of the Cheltenham Chronicle, ascended from Cheltenham; the balloon went up in a most beautiful style, to the admiration of an immense assemblage of persons; it was visible for 25 minutes, and took a south-east direction. The Balloon descended near North Leach, but on touching the ground the aéronauts could not immediately extricate themselves; the balloon reascended, and the netting, being partly cut, gave way when about 30 feet from the earth, and Messrs. Green and Griffith were precipitated with great violence to the ground. Mr. Green received a serious contusion on the left side of the chest, and Mr. Griffith a severe injury of the spine.

The ballon was secured about six o'clock the same evening, having fallen in a wheat field of Mr. Wright, at Ecton Lodge, apparently without the least injury.”\*

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### *Walks near Ecton.*

Among the pleasant walks in the vicinity of Ecton, the one conducting to Earl's Barton† must have the pre-eminence; as it commands an extensive view of the subjacent scenery, including the villages of Cogenhoe, Whiston, Grendon, &c., the latter of which

\* The same Aéronaut two years after made a descent at Milton, near Northampton.

† “The Church of this parish is a singular and very curious example of ancient architecture.”

is seen to much advantage, particularly while enriched “with the spoils of parting day;” and among the rural places of promenade, I must not omit to point out the walk to *Sywell*, where

“The rude and moss grown beech,\*  
O'er canopies the glade.”

By verging out of the regular road, to the right, a rustic temple will be discovered, bounded by plantations. The walk over the meadows to Whiston (which possesses “an elegant and uniform church, proudly elevated on the brow of a hill, embosomed in trees, and completely detached from other buildings”) is worthy of notice. About the mid-way between these places is a remarkable echo, which will repeat several syllables very distinctly. A mile beyond Whiston is *Castle Ashby*, the seat of the Marquis of Northampton, which is highly deserving of a visit.

*View of Churches described by Mr. Morton.*

“From a hill between *Great Billing* and *Overstone* we have a view of forty-five Churches, or Steeples: twenty spires, twenty-four towers, and one other Church. I have here exhibited a list of them. The Figures denote the number of miles which each

\* “The leaves of the beech gathered in autumn, before the frost has injured them, make better matrasses than straw or chaff, and will last seven or eight years. The nuts, eaten raw, occasion giddiness and severe headache, but baked and powdered make a wholesome bread. In Silesia, butter is made from the oil extracted from the nut.” (*Astley's Hints to Planters.*)

Church, or Steeple, is distant from the said Hill. *Sp.* signifies Spire, *T.* Tower.

- Great Billing, Sp.  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a Mile.
- Hanslope, Sp. 8.
- Piddington, Sp. 5.
- Little Billing,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ .
- Abington, T. 2.
- Gayton, T. 6.
- St. Giles', Northampton, T. 3.
- All Saints, T. 3.
- Cold Higham, T. 7.
- St. Sepulchre's, Northampton, Sp. 3.
- A Tower, probably Stow Nine  
Churches, 9.
- Boughton, Sp. 2.
- Spratton, Sp. 5.
- Guilsborough, Sp. 8.
- Moulton, T. 1.
- Brixworth, Sp.  $4\frac{1}{2}$ .
- Naseby, Sp. 9.
- Haslebeach, T. 8.
- Overstone, T.  $\frac{1}{2}$ .
- Sywell, T. 1.
- Mear's Ashby, T. 2.
- Cooknoe, T. 3.
- Gt. Houghton, Sp. 4.
- Courtenhall, T. 7.
- Hardingston, T. 4.
- Weston Favell, Sp.  $1\frac{1}{2}$ .
- Blisworth, T. 6.

A Spire, probably Raunds.  
 Wilby, Sp. 3.  
 Higham Ferrers, Sp.  $7\frac{1}{2}$ .  
 Rudsden, Sp. 7.  
 Irchester, Sp. 6.  
 A Spire, probably New-ton Broomeshold, 1. }  
 Dodding, T. 3.  
 Piddington, Sp. 7.  
 Woollaston, Sp. 5.  
 Earl's Barton, T. 2.  
 Ecton, T. 1.  
 Bozeat, Sp. 6.  
 Grendon, T. 5.  
 Easton Mauduit, Sp. 6.  
 Whiston, T. 4.  
 Castle Ashby, T. 5.  
 Brayfield, T. 3.

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*SIR AUGUSTINE NICHOLLS.*

Ecton will be venerated as the birth-place of that exemplary character, Sir Augustine Nicholls, Son of Thomas Nicholls, Serjeant at Law, whose grandfather purchased the Wardon-Abbey Manor in Ecton, upon which in the twenty-eighth of the reign of Elizabeth a fine was levied by Edward Stoninge, Gent., and Augustine Nicholls; the former of whom sold it to John Freeman, Gent. “When Sir Augustine

had finished his University education, he studied our municipal law, and attained to such eminency in it, that Queen Elizabeth made him a Serjeant, and King James I. conferred upon him the same office; whence he was freely preferred to be one of the Judges. *Freely* (we say) because King James used to call him *The Judge that would give no money*.

In his office he was renowned for the best judiciary endowments, as patience to hear, a memory to retain, a sagacity to search and discern, and integrity to determine impartially all causes without any gratuity whatever. He never would travel upon the Lord's Day, which wrought a reformation upon some of his own order; and he loved (as he expressed it) plain and honest preaching, which touched the conscience, not tickled the ears. He died as he went the Northern Circuit, and has a fair monument set up for him in Kendal Church, Westmorland."

Mr. Pennant calls it "a mural monument of Sir Augustine Nicholls, one of the Justices of the Common Pleas, who died here (Kendal) in Court, in discharge of his office in 1616." (See "*Tour from Downing to Alston Moor*," p. 119.

THE FAMILY OF  
*DR. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.*

It appears that the celebrated Dr. Benjamin Franklin's Ancestors had "a freehold estate of about thirty acres at Ecton, for the space of at least three

hundred years, where they resided, carrying on the trade of Blacksmith."

" The Doctor's Grandfather Thomas was born here in 1598, lived at Ecton till he was too old to continue his trade, when he retired to *Banbury*, Oxfordshire, where his son John, who was a dyer, resided, and with whom Josias the Doctor's Father was apprenticed. He died and was buried there. His eldest son lived in the family house at Ecton, which he bequeathed, with the land belonging to it, to his only daughter; who, in concert with her husband, Mr. Fisher, of Wellingborough, afterward sold it to Mr. Isted.

Dr. Franklin's Grandfather had four sons, Thomas, John, Benjamin, and Josias, born at Ecton.

Thomas had learned the trade of Blacksmith under his Father; but possessing a good natural understanding, he improved it by study, at the solicitation of a gentleman of the name of Palmer, who was at that time the principal inhabitant of the village, and who encouraged, in like manner, all his Brothers to cultivate their minds. Thomas thus rendered himself competent to the functions of a country attorney; soon became an essential personage in the affairs of the village; and was one of the chief inovers of every public enterprise as well relative to the county, as the town, of Northampton. After enjoying the esteem and patronage of Lord Halifax, he died January 6, 1702.\*

\* See inscription on his monument, p. 26.

John, it is said, was brought up to the trade of wool-dyer.

Benjamin, served his apprenticeship in London to a silk-dyer. He arrived at a great age, and left behind him two quarto volumes of poems in manuscript, consisting of little fugitive pieces addressed to his friends. He invented a short hand. Was a man of piety, and a constant attendant on the best preachers, whose sermons he took a pleasure in writing down, according to the expeditory method he had devised. Many volumes were thus collected by him."

I regret to state that the house which the Franklin Family inhabited has long ago been demolished. It was situated in the lower part of the village.

*FINIS.*

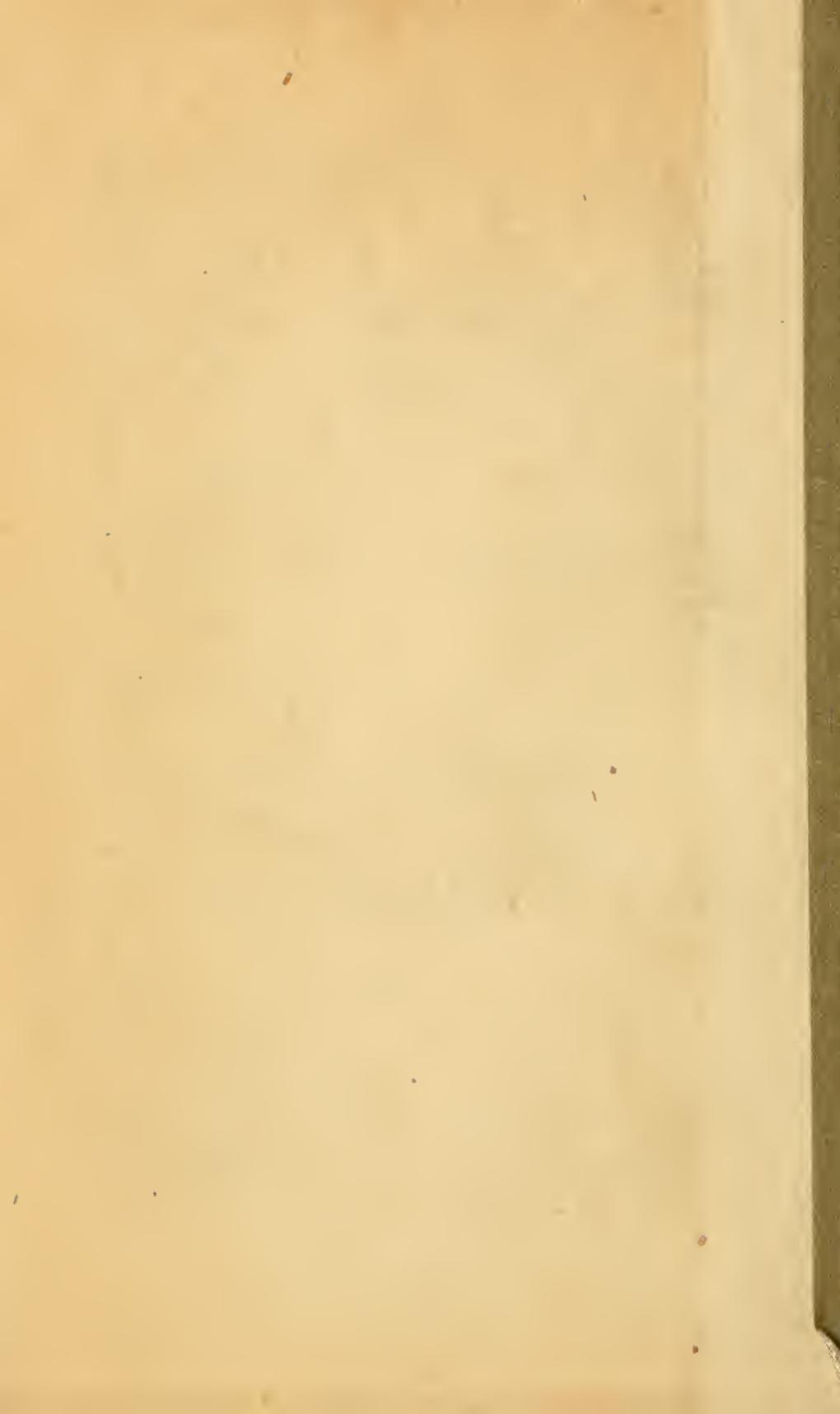


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